REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Applicants originally submitted Claims 1-50 in the application. Previously, the Applicants amended Claims 1-4, 11-14, 21-24, 31-34, 41-44 and 46. In the present Office Action, the Examiner has indicated that dependent Claims 2, 11, 20, 23-24, 27, 20-31, 34, 39-40, 42-43 and 49-50 include allowable subject matter. The Applicants believe all of the pending Claims are allowable. The Applicants, therefore, have not amended, canceled or added any claims in the present response. Accordingly, Claims 1-50 are currently pending in the application.

I. Rejection of Claims 1, 3-7, 10 and 12-16 under 35 U.S.C. §102

The Examiner has rejected Claims 1, 3-7, 10 and 12-16 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,982,772 to Oskouy. The Applicants respectfully disagree since Oskouy does not teach facilitating communications between a master device and a slave device including reading a level of a first-in, first-out (FIFO) buffer of the slave device, comparing the level to a threshold and issuing an event driven message to the master device over the local interface when the level reaches the threshold as recited in independent Claims 1 and 10.

Oskouy is directed to providing a segmentation and reassembly (SAR) engine which is independent of interface protocol and which can be interfaced to an Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) Cell Interface operating at a different data rate. (*See* column 1, lines 10-13.) Oskouy discloses a network interface controller (NIC) 12 that transfers data between a host computer 48 and other computers in a network. (*See* column 3, lines 33-35 and Figure 2.) The NIC 12 includes a core 22, a TX FIFO 28 and a cell interface block 32. The TX FIFO 28 is coupled

between the core 22 and the cell interface block 32 and is employed to stage transmit cell payloads of transmit packets. (*See* column 4, lines 9-13.)

The Examiner asserts an event driven message is issued over a local interface to the host 48 when a level of the TX FIFO 28 reaches a threshold. (*See* Examiner's Action, page 2.) The TX FIFO 28, however, asserts a signal 118 to the core 22 to indicate that it is almost empty and ready for more data bursts and asserts another signal 120 to the cell interface block 32 to indicate the cell interface block 32 should prepare to cease reading data. (*See* column 6, lines 60-67 and Figures 3 and 4a.) Neither of these signals are issued to the host 48. Thus, the TX FIFO 28 sends signals to other components of the NIC 12 but does not issue an event driven message to the host 48. As such, Oskouy does not teach issuing an event driven message to a master device when a level of a FIFO buffer reaches a threshold as asserted by the Examiner and recited in independent Claims 1 and 10.

Oskouy, therefore, does not disclose each and every element of independent Claims 1 and 10 and Claims dependent thereon. Thus, Oskouy does not anticipate Claims 1, 3-7, 10 and 12-16. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the §102 rejection with respect to Claims 1, 3-7, 10 and 12-16 and allow issuance thereof.

II. Rejection of Claims 8-9 and 17-18 under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner has rejected Claims 8-9 and 17-18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Oskouy in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,995,486 to Iliadis. The Applicants respectfully disagree.

As discussed above, Oskouy does not teach issuing an event driven message to a master device when a level of a FIFO buffer reaches a threshold as recited in independent Claims 1 and 10. Oskouy also does not suggest issuing an event driven message to a master device when a level of a FIFO buffer reaches a threshold since Oskouy teaches managing the buffering of data within the NIC 12 itself without informing the host 48 when a threshold level of a buffer is reached. (*See* column 6, line 60 to column 7, line 6 and Figure 4a.) Accordingly, Oskouy does not teach or suggest each element of independent Claims 1 and 10.

Iliadis is directed to a gateway or node sending start and stop signals to an upstream gateway or node to prevent an overflow of its buffer. (*See* column 1, lines 9-12.) Iliadis has not been cited to cure the above deficiency of Oskouy but to teach the subject matter of Claims 8-9 and 17-18. Thus, the cited combination of Iliadis and Oskouy does not teach or suggest each and every element of independent Claims 1 and 10 and Claims dependent thereon. The cited combination, therefore, fails to provide a *prima facie* case of obviousness of Claims 8-9 and 17-18 which depend on independent Claims 1 and 10, respectively. As such, Claims 8-9 and 17-18 are not unpatentable in view of Oskouy and Iliadis. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the § 103(a) rejection and allow issuance of Claims 8-9 and 17-18.

III. Rejection of Claims 19, 21-22, 25-26, 28-29, 32-33, 35-37, 41 and 44-47 under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner has rejected Claims 19, 21-22, 25-26, 28-29, 32-33, 35-37, 41 and 44-47 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Oskouy in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,601,105 to Bell. The Applicants respectfully disagree.

As recognized by the Examiner, Oskouy does not teach or suggest determining storage levels of a plurality of channels associated with a slave device and periodically issuing to a master device a periodic message indicating the storage levels as recited in independent Claims 19, 26, 33 and 41. To cure this deficiency, the Examiner has cited Bell. (*See* Examiner's Action, page 5.) Bell is directed to controlling the flow of information between a producer and multiple buffers in a high frequency digital system. (*See* column 1, lines 19-22.) The Applicants do not find where Bell teaches or suggests periodically issuing to a master device a periodic message indicating the storage levels associated with a slave device as recited in independent Claims 19, 26, 33 and 41. Instead, Bell teaches that a control unit 18 sends a grant/hold 20 to a producer 12 indicating the number of packets the producer 12 may output. The grant/hold 20 does not indicate the storage level of a plurality of channels associated with a slave device but instead represents the lesser of a maximum bandwidth and the difference between a buffer capacity and the sum of a grant count, a buffer count and a producer output indication less the buffer output indication. (*See* column 4, lines 33-38 and Figure 1.) Bell, therefore, does not cure the above-recognized deficiency of Oskouy.

Thus, the cited combination of Oskouy and Bell does not teach or suggest each and every element of independent Claims 19, 26, 33 and 41 and Claims dependent thereon. The cited combination, therefore, fails to provide a *prima facie* case of obviousness of Claims 19, 21-22, 25-26, 28-29, 32-33, 35-37, 41 and 44-47. As such, Claims 19, 21-22, 25-26, 28-29, 32-33, 35-37, 41 and 44-47 are not unpatentable in view of Oskouy and Bell. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the § 103(a) rejection and allow issuance of Claims 19, 21-22, 25-26, 28-29, 32-33, 35-37, 41 and 44-47.

IV. Rejection of Claims 38 and 48 under 35 U.S.C. §103

The Examiner has rejected Claims 38 and 48 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Oskouy in view of Bell and in further view of Iliadis. The Applicants respectfully disagree.

As discussed above, the cited combination of Oskouy and Bell does not teach or suggest each element of independent Claims 33 and 41. Iliadis has not been cited to cure this deficiency of the cited combination but to teach the subject matter of Claims 38 and 48. Thus, the cited combination of Oskouy, Bell and Iliadis does not teach or suggest each and every element of independent Claims 33 and 41 and Claims dependent thereon. The cited combination, therefore, fails to provide a *prima facie* case of obviousness of Claims 38 and 48 which depend on independent Claims 33 and 41, respectively. As such, Claims 38 and 48 are not unpatentable in view of Oskouy, Bell and Iliadis. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the § 103(a) rejection and allow issuance of Claims 38 and 48.

V. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, the Applicants now see all of the Claims currently pending in this application to be in condition for allowance and therefore earnestly solicit a Notice of Allowance for Claims 1-50.

The Applicants request the Examiner to telephone the undersigned attorney of record at (972) 480-8800 if such would further or expedite the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: 11/18/05

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